

APPENDIX 2

The Southwark Conversation – further explanation of engagement methodology

1. An extensive range of engagement methods was used to ensure that the conversation reached as broad a sample of residents as possible.
2. The wide ranging community engagement process reflected an inclusive and ambitious approach which was designed in adherence to the government Code of Practice on Consultation. The approach provided an assurance that the engagement was impartial and comprehensive, in that there were no pre-selected options to choose from.
3. From the responses received, the approach of more open engagement, for example using open, rather than multiple choice surveys, has been welcomed by many residents participating.
4. The primary research method used in the engagement exercise was qualitative rather than quantitative. Semi-structured interviews and open surveys were either completed in an interview or in most cases written by the participants themselves.
5. The amount of data generated was therefore extensive. Several thousand specific comments were made by participants with a sample size that far exceeded one that market researchers would use to carry out quantitative research. Further, the findings can be assumed to have a very high degree of confidence.
6. Estimating magnitudes of responses based on qualitative research has limitations and therefore any numerical findings should not be read too literally. For this reason part of the report, as is common with qualitative research reports, uses qualifiers such as “more likely to say” rather than percentages.
7. Triangulation is the technique most commonly used to establish credibility or trustworthiness in qualitative research.

To enhance the credibility of this particular research the Council:

- Used multiple methods of data collection and analysis;
 - Used multiple data sets generated across the different methods of research;
 - Had a number of different people analysing the results;
 - Worked to ensure that the people we collected views from were diverse and therefore potentially held different perspectives on the issues we were researching.
8. The size of the sample was also significant (even though in qualitative research sample sizes tend to be smaller). In simple terms if we were to apply the method normally used in quantitative research to the population of the borough this would require a random sample size of just over 380 individuals to be 95% confident that the views that were represented were those of the whole population (within a standard margin of error of 5%). The sample size used in the Southwark Conversation was much larger and therefore gives more confidence that the results reflect what the population are ‘likely to say’.